

CASE STUDY

University Health Network (UHN)

UHN drives impressive diversion rates



The Situation

- University Health Network (UHN) is made up of Toronto General Hospital, Toronto Western Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital.
- UHN staff care for more than 27,614 inpatients with 872,678 clinic visits yearly.

The Goal

- To reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.
- To reduce the amount of garbage created through environmental purchasing policies.

The Outcome

UHN achieved a waste diversion rate of about 50 per cent at two of their three hospital sites.

How It Was Done

- Green Teams were formed at all three hospitals. They meet regularly to discuss day-to-day operational challenges and identify new waste-reduction and recycling opportunities.

In addition to running traditional blue box recycling programs, UHN has initiated Beyond the Blue Box recycling programs that collect fluorescent bulbs, mercury-containing products, batteries, food waste, scrap metal and wood pallets.

- The Green Procurement policy gives preference, where feasible, to vendors who supply reusable products, limit packaging, supply products and packaging that are easily recyclable under UHN programs and take back products and packaging that are not reusable or recyclable.
- A virtual swap room was created online for staff to swap good, free, non-medical or clinical items (i.e. desks, chairs, cabinets, etc.).
- A policy was implemented to ensure that surplus materials are donated, rather than thrown away.

Learn more about UHN's greening practices by checking out their blog at <http://talkintrashwithuhn.com/>